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land; and he has given some interesting sketches of his college instructors and of his clerical brethren of later years,—Dr. Webster, the oracle of the moderate party, Robertson, the historian, Campbell, author of “The Philosophy of Rhetoric,” Witherspoon, afterward President of the College at Princeton, New Jersey, and others of lesser note. He went to London several times, and was personally acquainted with Sir Gilbert Elliot, Burke, Fox, Lord Macartney, Archdeacon Coxe, and other distinguished politicians and writers, and he was present at several important debates in Parliament. The most useful and attractive chapter in his volume is devoted to a sketch of the social condition of Scotland in the early part of his life, which even now is full of interest, and will be of inestimable worth to the future historian. Every chapter, however, gives evidence of a clear-headed and upright man, and no one can read the volume without a feeling of respect for its author. His closing words show at once the vigor of his constitution, and the spirit in which his book is written.

“I am now,” he writes, “while closing these memoirs, advancing in the seventy-fourth year of my age, and the forty-ninth of my ministry. I have never, since I recollect, been confined a single day to my bed by indisposition, except in consequence of the accident of a fall from my horse above forty-eight years ago. I have not, perhaps, been more than once or twice disabled for the performance of my public duty every Sabbath-day, except during my recent confinement occasioned by the rupture of the *tendo Achillis*. Though infirmities begin to besiege me, they are slighter than those which are incident to the generality of persons at my advanced age, which, under the blessing of Providence, I ascribe to my habitual temperance and regularity in exercise. Manifold, indeed, to me, have been the bounties of Providence. May I be thankful for them; and may the large experience I have had of the Divine goodness confirm my trust, and encourage my hope in God!”

8. — *The Recreations of a Country Parson*. Second Series. Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1861. 16mo. pp. 430.

EVERY one who is familiar with “The Recreations of a Country Parson” will be glad to see a Second Series of those delightful essays, and will recognize with pleasure in it the same genial temper and healthful views which made the previous volume so popular. The new collection comprises thirteen essays similar in form and purpose to those in the first series. They include, however, a wider range of topics, and some of them have been written since the author exchanged his country parsonage for a city rectory, and consequently under the inspiration of new scenes, and with a much wider experience. This

change forms, in fact, the theme of the first essay in the volume, and the reasons which induced Mr. Boyd to accept a new field of ministerial usefulness are there set forth in some of his best pages. The paper is marked by wise thought expressed in simple and graceful language, and is quite worthy of the place which it holds at the very commencement of the new series. Among the best of the essays are those entitled "Concerning Summer Days," "Concerning Solitary Days," "Concerning Glasgow down the Water," and "Concerning the Pulpit in Scotland." Several of the other essays are also deserving of high commendation, and in some of them there are passages quite equal, if not superior, to anything in the papers which we have enumerated.

Mr. Boyd is not an original nor a very profound writer. He seldom adduces new arguments, and seldom places a subject in a new light. But we know no writer who can state a simple truth with more clearness and elegance, or illustrate it with more felicity of expression, or with a more just view of its various relations. If the range of his powers is not great, he thoroughly understands the measure of his own abilities, and never attempts anything which he cannot accomplish. His chief defect as an essayist is his discursiveness. This, however, is not apparent in all his essays; and in the best of them he never loses sight of his main purpose.

9. — *Index to the Catalogue of Books in the Upper Hall of the Public Library of the City of Boston.* Boston: George C. Rand and Avery, Printers to the City. 1861. Royal 8vo. pp. viii. and 902.

THE rapid growth of the Public Library of this city, and the large measure of success which has hitherto attended its operations, afford new and striking evidence of the high estimation in which literary culture is held in our community. Though the institution is not yet ten years old, it is already one of the largest in the United States, and no similar collection of books has ever been made accessible to so many persons, both for consultation within the library building, and for use at home. We gladly avail ourselves, therefore, of the opportunity presented by the publication of the volume named above, to lay before our readers a brief account of its history and present condition. For the materials of this sketch we are mainly indebted to the Annual Reports of the Trustees, and other printed documents.

The first efficient steps toward the formation of a free library in this city appear to have been taken in the latter part of 1847, when both branches of the city government voted unanimously, "That the City of